PS 3511
.E22 W4
1924
Copy 1

WELLS OF THE HEART

BY
WILLIAM FREDERICK FELD, S. J.

Class PS 3511
Book .E22W4
Copyright No. 1924

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

William Frederick Feld, S. J.

WELLS of the HEART

By

William Frederick Feld, S. J.

PUBLISHED BY
THE OLSEN PUBLISHING CO.
FIFTH AND CHERRY STS. MILWAUKEE

© 1924

FS 3511
.E22.W4
1924

Copyright, 1924
By William F. Feld, S. J.

APR 28 '24

©CIA792158

CONTENTS

Page

Frontispiece 3

My Little Friend 9

The Face of God 10

Hail, Kindly Cedars! Hail! 11

The Shelter Seekers 12

On Daddy's Knee 14

Sonnet "The wisdom of a discreet man" 15

Muted Strains—

I.—Invitation to the Poet 16

II.—He Declines 17

Detachment 18

Voice of the Seashell 19

The Touchstone 21

The Fallen Oak 22

To Mary 25

Summer Nocturn 26

Unspoken 28

The Sweetest Song of All 29

The Country's Call 30

Judge Not 32

Raising the Siege 33

Choice 34

Here in the Chapel's Dusky Aisle Apart 36

Absolved 37

The Patient God 38

CONTENTS (continued)

Page

Phantasmagoria 39

True Love 41

The Braver Knight 42

Gethsemane 43

The Publican 43

What War Can Do 44

Death 45

The Truest Alms 45

At the Gates of Eternity 46

Care-Free Rambles 47

Snow Dust 49

The Death-Bed of Ursula 51

"The Little Flower's" Choice 52

Dream Travel 53

To a Kindly Sympathizer 55

To the Bumblebee 57

To Little Dog Petey 59

A Ballad to the Jingo 61

His Only Plea 62

My Little Friend

THERE is a little miss I meet,
I pass her daily on the street,
She greets me with a smile so sweet
That I am captivated.

A fairy she, scarce seven years old,
About her head play locks of gold;
No rose is fairer to behold
Than she, when all is stated.

She is like one of those—ah me!
That climbed the Savior's gentle knee,
And felt His hand so lovingly
Upon their silken tresses.

And when she asks me, "How are you?"
Just as all grown-up persons do,
I make a serious answer to
Her lady-like addresses.

God bless my cheery little friend!
Her artless ways I would not mend;
I'd have her thus unto the end,
Could I but have my pleasure.

Methinks full surely God has given
This sunny sprite of years scarce seven,
To closer link my heart to Heaven,
And there to place my treasure.

The Face of God

THERE are no pangs to souls forlorn
Where riven hearts are aching,
Nor tears of childhood's sunny morn
Which are not of thy making,
O Sorrow, that from pole to pole,
Dost yield us all thy bitter dole!

The rose we pluck in beauty's blow
Gives sadness in the taking;
There's sorrow in the sunset's glow
Our wistful eyes forsaking.
No joy-cup to our lips we press
But hath its drop of bitterness.

Our loves are purest, so we deem,
Where stricken self lies sighing;
Just as the rainbow's loveliest beam
Yet lovelier seems in dying.
And from the cradle to the grave
The heart's best gifts 'twas sorrow gave.

There is one object over all—
'Tis Heaven when we view it;
There's but one thing which cannot pall,
But losing which we rue it—
The Face of God. Can aught save this
Flood us with tides of perfect bliss?

Hail, Kindly Cedars! Hail!

OH, HERE'S a glee to the cedars,
Our staunch old friends and true!
What boots the snow, when the wild winds blow?
For never a change do the cedars know
All the long years through.

And here's a lilt to the cedars,
Sturdy of frame and mien.
Where the lordly oak-tree's pride is fled,
And he stares as a Gorgon, stark and dead,
There be the cedars green.

A toss of my cap to the cedars,
The lovingest trees that be!
The time-tides roll and the seasons veer,
Yet tender, sweeter year by year,
My cedars are to me.

A parting word to the cedars,
For a friend of the cedars am I.
They'll give in death what in life they gave,
When they keep their vigils near the grave
Where under the sod I lie.

The Shelter Seekers

YEARS ago while the moon rained down
A silvery shower on Bethlehem town,

And earth lay pranked in wintry dress
Of a maiden snow-fall's loveliness;

And nipping winds from the northland blew,
As is their surly wont to do—

In the hush of eve long years ago,
Seeking a rooftree from the snow,

Two weary, footsore pilgrims came.—
At many a door in God's sweet name

One craved for the Lady shelter's boon,
'Neath the wonder gaze of the queenly moon.

O surely none would say them nay!
Were this not turning Heaven away?

Shelter he craved for the Lady there,
With the angel face and the winsome air;

But never a hearth was kind to them
'Mong the townsfolk there in Bethlehem.

And never a word spake they, may be,
To blunt their cold discourtesy;

And none of the townsfolk ever knew
Who at their doors did knock and sue.

Yet one wee star had....a great delight,
'Twould tryst by the blessed crib that night;

But she that kept lone watch above—
The sad-eyed moon—what thought she of?

On Daddy's Knee

COME huddle up closer, little one,
While the sandman comes for you;
And we'll rock away till your tiny sail
Is afloat on a sea of blue.

And the stars will blink, and the fireflies dance,
And the old moon split his sides;
For it's up and away where the dolphins play
Over the rippling tides.

So trim your sails in the good ship Nod,
Soon jolly good times there'll be,
When we enter the Ocean of Dreams ere long
Till the sun comes out of the sea.

And mama will stand on the silvery beach
Till her baby's ship heaves to;
And a kiss will welcome the rover back
To the Harbor of Love anew.

Sonnet

"The wisdom of a discreet man is to understand his way."—(Prov. XIV, 8.)

I ASK me not for dalliance path of ease,
Where sunlit stretches ever thrill the eye,
While song-birds throated red entreat the sky,
And rose-bursts flame their tinted ecstacies.
Nay, soul of mine, life's cunning witcheries
Leave we to fools who are content to buy
Brief hour of bliss for one eternal sigh—
Whose pleasure knells their dead souls' obsequies.

I would discern of bitterness the sweet,
Kiss tenderly my rood of little pains,
Make nothingness to coin me golden gains,
Learn wisdom's folly at my Master's feet,
And hear from Him: "Right nobly hast thou wrought;
Thy loanèd bond hath premium richly brought."

Muted Strains

I. INVITATION TO THE POET

I GROW unbidden,
A violet I,
In cranny hidden
To woo and die.

"Shouldst chance my bower
And where I be,
A sunshine dower
I'll be to thee.

"Meet haunt for fairy
This sheltered nook,
Where birds make merry
And purls the brook.

"Come lilt in gladness
Some ballad gay!
A truce to sadness
On such a day."

—(Continued on next Page)

Muted Strains

II. HE DECLINES

"My rhymes run slowly—
  Wilt thou I try?
My viol is lowly,
  Sweet plant," said I.

"My strains not soaring:
  My secret art
Is peace outpouring
  Where bleeds a heart.

"Here there is laughter
  And romp of Spring;
Anon hereafter,
  Beloved, I'll sing."

Detachment

NOT for thine own sake, comely Rose!
Hath He devised thee garb so sweet;
But that we viewing, first admire,
Then set thee blushing at His feet.
Yet lest thy lure should play us false
To miss the Giver in His gift,
There is a pricking thorn at hand—
A jealous love's reprisal swift.

Should love not guard its well beloved
From all impending harms that be,
Tho' pain cry out, and tear-drops flow
That token seeming cruelty?
For fangs of peril coil beneath
The siren thing that witches us—
Small wonder that a kindly God
Should turn its lure to bitterness.

Voice of the Seashell

THERE with tint pilfered of sunset at evening—
Amethyst, turquoise, with orient pearl—
There on my mantel a seashell's reclining,
Once did the surf billows over it curl.
Wistful in exile, sadly it pineth,
Ever it harks to some far away home.
Caitiff the hand that first did remove it,
Woful the plight which has made it to roam.

Take it up gently, then list to its saying!
Do you not catch the wild turmoil within—
Lash of the breakers that shudder on landward,
Blare of the tempest's commingling din?
Coasts that my vision shall rest upon never
Rise from a swirling and turbulent sea—
Headlands agrey with the chisel of ages,
Wont to naught else but lorn dirges of dree.

Fin of the ravenous shark o'er the seething,
Snort of the sea monster's joy in his play,
Dolphins abreast of the chargers of ocean,
Glint of white sails that are leagues far away,
Stretches on stretches of verdureless sand dune,
Haunt of the wild fowl that screams in its glee,
Where winged sea gulls careen in their flying—
Wondrous, O Seashell, thy message to me!

Vainly the Tritons of Neptune would have thee
  Trumpet their sea monarch's royal behest:
Better canst trumpet the heart of Old Ocean—
  Thou that hast dwelt 'neath the green of her breast!
Yet when thou tonguest thy mistress' fair beauty
  Choice of thy tribute thou rend'rest to Him—
Him that has dizened the rainbow and lily,
  Blazoned the archer moon's delicate rim.

The Touchstone

THOU DOST avow thy friendship leal and true.
So be it then. Yet if the veil should rise,
As aye it will, and to thine eager eyes
My bloody Cross of shame should rise to view,
Wouldst still be true?

Wilt cleave to Me till death, dost thou avow?
So be it then. Yet if the rod should bend
To smite and scourge thee till thy spirit send
Aloft its wail of piteous pleading pain,
Wouldst still be true?

If I should levy impost on thy heart,
And quench from galaxy of love each one
Of those fair stars thou fondly dotest on,
Couldst see a Father's hand in all thy smart?
Wouldst still be true?

And if I stripped thee bare, as frost the tree,
Till there, amid the dead leaves scattered round,
Only the naked trunk should cumber ground,—
How now? Wouldst falter not? Still cleave to Me?
Wouldst still be true?

The Fallen Oak

UPON the river's shingly beach there lies
Part 'mersed and part exposed, what erstwhile was
Some forest pride,—an ancient bole of oak.
Whence came it there no human tongue could tell.
No doubt when I am gone and laid to rest,
Full many a stranger wandering there will pause
And speculate upon its age, and draw
Reflection from its melancholy plight.

Black storms have raged and uttered fierce and loud
Their execrations o'er that monarch dead;
Descending rains have drenched, and monster waves
Have whelmed him o'er and o'er, and water-birds
In rapid flights have gloated o'er his head—
He heeds them not, but lieth there outstretched
Like some Leviathan in shackles bound,—
All powerless and yet defiant still
Unto the last.

The vermeil blush at eve,
The moon's caress or frolic of the stars,
A dawn imparadised at early morn,
Or winter's downy largess falling down
Are one to him,—he marks their presence not.

Time was when 'mong his brothers of the wood,
That he could glory in his rugged strength;
Could laugh to scorn the onset of the gale,
And look the blue of heaven in the face;
And hearken to the chansons of the birds,
And shelter them upon his gnarlèd limbs;
And catch the forest's murmured symphony
Of swaying boughs; and hear the vagrant owl
Make ghostly din; and sustenance afford
Unto the squirrel, his merry little friend.
What destiny unkind has laid him low?

Wouldst thou to heaven soar on wing of fame?
Wouldst have thy name and deeds emblazed fore'er
On tablets of a deathless age, that men
Of dawning generations thee may hail
As Corypheus of thy fellows all?
Wouldst have men chant in honeyed words of praise
The fame as poet, orator, savant?
Vain,—vain will all such glory be to thee
When thou thyself art mouldering in the dust.
The tooth of time will leave thee as yon oak—
A thing of wretched helplessness to point
A moral to each straggler passing by.

So part we, fallen monarch of the wood!
Let none presume with taunt disdainful then
To blast thy memory, or deem accursed
Thy lot. High heaven forfend! Hast nobly wrought;
Hast shed o'er man and beast thy canopy
Of cooling shade; hast bared thy rugged breast
To blighting thunder-bolts, that else to earth
Had crashed thy lesser kindred of the grove;
Hast braved thy century of chilling blasts;
Hast yielded of thy fruitage lavishly;
And fired youth to deed of high emprise
In emulation of thy sturdiness.
Thou saidst thy Nunc Dimittis worthily.
To thee..... all hail!

To Mary

MARY, if thou wouldst let me sing
My love for thee all hungering,
I'd pilfer honey like the bee
From all sweet things for song to thee.
I'd borrow from the philomel,
The violin should serve me well,
And I should pillage earth and sky
Till all things sweet with each should vie
To laud thee, Mother mild!

Mary, if I could paint thy face,
The Masters all should yield me place,
And all composite charms should meet
In thy fair visage exquisite.
I'd lend thee a robe of snowy white,
I'd gird thy brow with stars of night,
And only He should lovelier be
Thine arms caress so tenderly—
Thine own dear little Child.

Mary, if I could have my way
When splendor garbs each dying day,
Emblazèd shafts of sunset gold
Thy Son and thee should both enfold;
And gazing outward to the west,
All eyes should catch the vision blest,
And mightily one chant would rise
To hail thee Queen of Earth and Skies,
Thou peerless, undefiled!

Summer Nocturn

SHINE, tranquil stars,
That herald twilight's
Templed silences!
Shine ye, while tired zephyrs
Hold their breath,
And the tall spectral trees,
In pointed hood and sombre guise
Borrowed from the huddled dusk,
Lean towards me, cautionwise,
With a finger on the lip,
Whispering, "Hush! Hush!"

Shine, shepherd stars,
O'er modest coverlets
Where sleeping innocency lies
By angel wings caressed!
How dulcet the gloaming hours
All fraught with tenderness!
See, with what fondness
Each yearning mother flower
To her baby buds in leafly cradles
Tucked in, oh, so lovingly,
Croons dream songs softly,
As sweetly soothing
As far off strains nocturnal,
Coming on pinions gossamer
To pensive lattice bars.

Shine, sturdy sentinels,
As ye have done
Through cycles of dead yester-years—
And joyously,
Albeit from yonder
Dizzy-heighted parapets
Ye have eyed serenely
Ten thousand dastard spectacles,
And marked the wreck and tragedy
Of untold crumbling dynasties.
Be ye as ever unabashed
By myriad brooding harms ye witness,
And the skulking deeds of men
That shame the guardian spirits
Of the slumber hours.

Shine, wistful stars!
Full well can I divine
The bosomed secret of your sometime
Soulful earthward scrutiny;
For ye do leave behind you
Rueful traces
Of your telltale tears compassionate
To dim the silken lashes
Of the waking dawn. Verily
Ye visioned Him
Who hanged upon the Atoning Mount
So roofed in shrouded loneliness;
And ye did learn your pitying lesson
Well and everlastingly.
Farewell, lovely stars.....Adieu!

Unspoken

OUR tongues are jailers to the soul. Behind
The durance bar of futile words remain
Immured what regal thoughts that pine in vain
For cozy shelter in some kindred mind!
Alas, for verbal penuries that bind
The chafing spirit with their galling chain!
Must thought unprized of us forever gain
The hearing nobler thought has failed to find!

But when these earth-sprung bodies of decay
Shall cease to hamper us forevermore,
Then shall our unleashed spirits upward soar
And pink of converse share eternally.
Then hail thee, poet-wand of wizardry,
That givest dungeoned thought her liberty!

The Sweetest Song of All

IT IS not that my love of olden days
Has waned towards thee, my own, my gracious Queen!
That hushed from every strain of fervid praise
This poor and humble lyre of mine has been;
But that such halting song as mine
Were mute to tell
My veneration for thee
And my love as well.

I have not held my peace because I felt
No more the joyous old-time thrill that came,
When suppliant at some shrine of thine I knelt,
And called upon thy sweet and gentle name;
But that I deemed my timid verse
A shabby thing
To tender unto thee
For suited offering.

But now I see that love may strongest be
When impotent its burning tale to tell.
Such impotence makes sweeter melody
Than strains where splendid angel choirs dwell.
And love, tho' in its meanest garb
Of words expressed,
May prove the sweetest song
Of all, and e'en the best.

The Country's Call

THE drumtaps beat, the winds repeat
Fair freedom's battle cry.
Our sires have taught us freedom's worth;
Here freedom leaped to glorious birth,
Upmounting to the sky;
And if she's worth the throes, the pain,
The crimson toll of heroes slain,
'Twere churlish to demur.

Yes, yes, we're in—now doth begin
Our quota to the dead.
We'll shrink not from the leaden pour;
We've tramped o'er sodden field before
With firm unflinching tread.
One bosomed hope shall fostered be
That our God boon, Democracy,
Strike root in every land.

Yes, we are in—God help us win
And rouse our civic pride.
Oh! there be evils worse by far
To nations than the ills of war,
Let these be multiplied.
A spineless, selfish people's way
Unerring leads to base decay—
Its hopes are in the dust.

Wave then our flag from spire and crag,
  Proud emblem of the free!
We'll bear it on to France's shore;
We'll flaunt it where the thunders roar
  To strain of martial glee;
And pause not till Old Glory true
Floats out our colors to the blue
  In sign of victory.

Chicago Tribune
Dec. 16, 1917

Judge Not

I WOULD not have thee judge my heart
By what the outward eye can see;
To judge my heart is Heaven's part,
And Heaven will kindliest deal with me.

The heart is our own citadel,
Which God alone can penetrate.
No mind can tell or know so well
Our thoughts, and whence they emanate.

To harsher thoughts say thou adieu.
Are kindlier judgments not the best?
The kindliest view comes soonest true
When deeds are put to certain test.

To judge thy neighbor be thou slow;
And peaceful shall thy slumber be.
On friend or foe, do thou bestow
Thy sweet and gentle charity.

Raising the Siege

THE day is done.
Within the stronghold of her palisade
Of mantled shade,
Beleaguered twilight loudly laughs to scorn
The routed archer sun,
Crestfallen, and of vaunted splendor shorn.
He, in the postern of the west,
His deep chagrin
And baffled spleen
Doth still attest,
With glinting spite shafts spent of power,
'Gainst twilight's armoured hour.
Anon hath ceased the fight,
And now, within the tents of night,
The twilight minions bivouac till the day;
Yet with concern
To flee, lest with a goodlier array,
The wily vanquished foe betimes return
And so renew the fray.

Choice

A TRAVELER would I be,
But never ivied ruins fair,
Nor sacred fanes that soar in prayer
Should lure my soul the strongest;
But where my Master walked and died,
The soil His feet have glorified—
Here would I linger longest—
Jesus!

A writer would I be,
But none such feats of heroes great
My facile pen should e'er relate
As vaunt of earthly glory;
But princely deeds of love divine
Of Him Who paid His life for mine
I'd tell in thrilling story—
Jesus.

A miner would I be,
But not to delve into the ground
Where gleaming treasure may be found
That fools go frantic over.
Nay, biding treasure would I seek
And find it in that Heart all meek
Of Him, my gentle Lover,
Jesus.

A sculptor would I be,
Yet not to have the mallet stroke
From senseless marble to evoke
Almost a sentient creature;
But in my soul, with stroke of grace,
Christ's other self should grow apace
In comeliness of feature—
Jesus.

Here in the Chapel's Dusky Aisle Apart

WOULDST thou unbare the counsel of thy breast
To kindred soul that will a balm impart?
Dost crave some solace for thy drooping heart?
Go sooner thou to Him; 'tis far the best;
Within His gift is biding peace and rest.
Here in the chapel's dusky aisle apart
Kneel thou a child in trust, whoe'er thou art,
And thou shalt know thyself a welcome guest.

Full many a wayworn pilgrim here hath felt—
Here where the timid sheen of yonder light
Feels through the dark as glowworm in the night
Renewal of his spirit as he knelt
In prayerful converse by the feet of Him,
The ecstasy of Saint and Seraphim.

Absolved

IS IT from guilt, O Night!
Thy dewy tears contrite
  Moisten thy bed?
Behold, yon coming father Sun
Hath gauged thy tear-drops every one—
  Be comforted!
He sends from out the templed East
Majestic Dawn, his herald priest,
  And o'er thy shamed and sorrowing head
  His sacramental arm outspread
Gives biding pledge that thou art shriven—
Go hence, O Prodigal, forgiven!

The Patient God

KINDLY His hand of power that holds in check
The raging sea's battalions hurtling on;
Splendid His artist eye to so bedeck
With stars the vault of night against the dawn.

Sweet His concern that minds to benefit
Each nursling flower whereso'er it grow;
The bird of passage—well He tutors it
To flee before the gelid breath of snow.

Glorious His power that rears the spiring trees
To shape a temple in some velvet dell,
Where sylvan songsters flute their symphonies
Rich as the molten chime of a silver bell.

Yet I do sense Him most to be.....a God!
For patience wonderful He deigns to me—
The mother heart of Him that stays the rod,
And woos me to forego iniquity.

Phantasmagoria

I SAT me near the hearth's faint flickering flame;
A thousand fairy fancies went and came,
While cold and cruel raged the wintry gale
Along the barren hill and frozen dale.
I nodded, drowsed, and in unfettered sleep,
I wandered, fancy free, the trackless deep.

Far upward in the Arctic's icy waste,
Methought I saw on crystal fabric placed,
Enthroned the North King, clad in regal state,
Whose slightest nod a menial host await.
'Twas where the foot of man had never strayed,
His eye had ne'er the glorious scene surveyed;
'Twas where no venturous bark e'er skimmed the brine,
Where peaks ice-crested in the sunlight shine;
'Twas where the monarch holds perpetual sway,
Where frozen deeps his every wish obey.

See! myriad snowflakes in a whirl descend,
And copse and brake in trembling agony bend;
The meadows now in glittering shrouds are wrapped,
And icy fetters on the streams are clapped:
'Tis now I know the tyrant's spell is cast
On land and sea,—the Ruler of the blast.
Then whistling, howling, shrieking on his way,
I see him hurtling on through all the day.
The playful fountain gushing erst with life,
Where roses glowed and violets were rife,
Stands stark in death, a horror in its gaze,
Its music frozen, hushed its roundelays.

A palace towering toward the frigid skies
Stands glittering with a host of varied dyes.
No onset of the North King's raging powers
Can shake its green-hued battlements and towers.
A crystal gate gives entrance to the hold,
When havoc-sated, king and minions bold
Quit southern climes, and in the castle great
Have wassail high and rule their proud estate.
With rarest frostwork all the portals beam,
And opalescent crystals glint and gleam.
The stately monarch treads a man of might,
With jeweled sceptre, crown, and vesture white.
E'en as King Aeolus did in bondage keep
Unruly winds that strove their bounds to leap,
So, too, in gelid caverns pent secure,
The North King holds his blustering vassals sure.

At times on pleasure bent the king goes forth
To hunt the monsters of the frigid North.
Then winged sea-fowl and the sporting seal
And polar bears his fateful presence feel.
Oft, too, some hapless ship that plows the main
Is hurled in fragments o'er the watery plain.
The hunt tears on beneath the northern lights
That flame aloft and crimson all the heights.
In sledge of gold the king pursues the chase,
And like a meteor flashes into space.

Whe—ew! What's this? My wandering wits return,
The fires no longer on the hearthstone burn.
My limbs are numb, I'm shivering with cold.
Confound old Morpheus and the North King bold!

True Love

WOULDST know the most delightful song—
The sweetest man can sing?
The tongueless anthem deep and strong,
That finds the wonted phrase too long,
The flaming heart's outpouring sigh—
'Tis this that penetrates the sky
And captivates the King.

Where true love dwells within a heart,
Convention it defies.
True love it scorns set laws of art—
Like eagle skyward does it dart.
The best of what it has it gives;
Yet being poor, the richer lives,
And lives whereof it dies.

The Braver Knight

IF thou couldst take
thy needy brother's place
And be the pleader at another's door,
Wouldst feel aggrieved
if so he turned his face,
Nor gave thee aught from out his ample store?

Couldst thou but change
thy lot for just a while,
And have as he, thy brother's heart of woe,
Wouldst lightly prize
the cheery word or smile
Thou gavest not, but now thou cravest so?

There's many a sorrow
thou shalt never know;
The greater burden seeks the stouter soul.
Thy brother's shield
can bear a sturdier blow;
Else had there been for him a lighter dole.

Gethsemane

INTO His heart's forge flaming red
Is thrust crude ore of thought,
Which on His will's stout anvil bed
To giant deed is wrought.

The Publican

NOT from sheer skies of blue
Refreshing rains have birth,
But sable clouds, down low,
Smit with the lightning's blow
Renew the blistered earth.

What War Can Do

WHAT can war do?
Enkindle giant fires of hate and wrath,
Leave charred and smoking ruin in its path;
Gold-dabbled fields to bloody shambles turn,
Where highest glory is to hack and burn;
And when the battle smoke has cleared away,
The pink of mankind is the vulture's prey:—
This war can do.

What can war do?
Undo what toiling ages left in fee,—
Give bankrupt heirloom to posterity;
Snatch husband from a cherished wife's embrace,
And leave at every hearth some vacant place.
Do fiendish deeds that only spawn of hell
Could aptly joy thereat and say: 'tis well:—
This war can do.

What can war do?
Lay on the lash until amid the dust
Our loud peccavis purge the deed unjust;
Scourge us until we prize the worth of peace,
And plead to Him we've slighted for release;
Down topple every idol of our pride,
Turn heedless millions to the Crucified: —
This war can do.

Death

THE teeming, drooping, golden ear
Invites the gleaner's knife;
And for the harvest of the year,
Ope's wide the bin of life.

The Truest Alms

NOT from the silken purse, but from the heart
The truest alms proceed;
The coin that succors half the beggar's smart
Leaves other half to bleed.

Some stray "God bless you," thou didst here repeat
May net thee highest pay,
When thou shalt stand beside the Judgment Seat
Upon the Judgment Day.

At the Gates of Eternity

STAR beams may glimmer and gleam,
  Flowers may shimmer and glow,
Waters may flash till we almost deem
  They are opal gems that we know;
Yet a single smile from our Lady's eyes,
  That upon her lips would play,
Would turn bleak earth into Paradise
  And a bower of bliss for aye.

Sweet is the organ's peal
  And a bird's clear matin song;
Charming the notes that softly steal
  Through the hush of the night along;
Yet a word of our Lady's lips would be
  A sound so dear and sweet,
Our ears would swoon with its melody,
  And our hearts would lie at her feet.

Welcome the rest at eve
  When the busy task is done;
Happy the victor to receive
  Praise when his fight is won;
Yet three glad things of glad things all
  My dying choice would be—
A word, a smile, and our Lady's call
  At the Gates of Eternity.

Care-Free Rambles

THEN brightly shines the sun by day
And care-free zephyrs blow,
I'll ramble—oh, so far away!—
I reck not where I go.

To some fern-haunted nook I'll stray,
Find me a bower there,
Where red-breast robin's roundelay
Makes frolicsome the air.

A dainty patch of sun-kissed sky
Will tag me through the trees;
Some year-scarred oak may charm mine eye
To martial rhapsodies.

Should chance impel me to yon stream,
I'll step with silken tread
To note where sportive fishes gleam
Above their mossy bed.

Where love-lorn lilies pure as snow
Coquet the vagrant breeze,
And clumps of sweet wild flowers grow
To tempt bold robber-bees.

And pasture lands full oft I'll pass
  Where cattle pause to drink,
Or browse on plot of tender grass
  Beside the river's brink.

I'll steal upon the water rat
  And silent in the shade,
I'll view him near the habitat
  His nightly toil has made.

And gorgeous sunsets I shall see
  To thrill me with delight,
Until night's sombre tapestry
  Shuts out their glories bright.

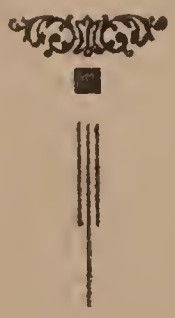
I'll see Apocalyptic fires
  Of colors who should say,
As if upon their blazing pyres
  The sun had passed away.

But ah! whene'er such sights I see,
  Such glimpses as I stray,
I ken that Thou, my Deity,
  Art not so far away.

Snow Dust

SNOW dust down drifting—that is all.
So eloquently silent is its fall!
Is it some White Compassion weaves this dress
To hide how much of winter's ugliness?
One solitary cedar tree,
Festooned, takes on to me
The semblance of an Arctic reverie.
Tight shut each drab and lashèd lid
Of yonder sullen sky,
That keeps immured and safely hid
The sun-god's garish gleaming eye.
What means this fairy shower—
These tinsel tokens trailing from on high?
Be they the snow-clad fragments of an hour?
Thru zig-zag lanes of air
The nagging gusts hound them most everywhere,
Down to the earth's great trundle-bed,
So stark, so utterly disgarmented.
Comes it from heart of love
Some kindly miller from above
Sifts down this plethora of flour?
Or has Aladdin plied his wishing power
To prank, as 'twere, a pretty counterpane
For nursling plants a-silent slumbering,
Until what time comes wakening of Spring
Which blue birds warble, warble back again?

But, oh, amen! amen!
The blue birds may not warble back again
The nurslings underneath the sod
That stricken mothers have consigned to God.
In charmland heaven's rich parterre
They blossom and they bloom forever there.



The Death-Bed of Ursula

THE skin ethereal and the bloodless lip,
The wan, wan cheek and gasping after breath—
These tell their tale of—shall I whisper it,
The griding word? They tell the tale—of death.

Beside her couch the parents muse and pray,
Biding the laggard hours as they go.
Despite yon sick-bed's sterner evidence
How parent love—rebels to have it so!

She and demise—words strangely dissonant,
Bare thought of them turns thinking into tears.
And must thou enter here, grim reaper, Death?
Bethink! 'tis Spring not Autumn of her years.

Will sunshine long defer its entrance here
When she is gone? Or song of sweetling bird
Sound as it sounded in the cheery past,
When oft her own sweet cheery song was heard?

"Grieve not for me, dear parents," said the maid,
And oh, the world of bravery in those eyes!
Love shall remember her thru years of days,
And fondly trust to greet her in the skies.

"The Little Flower's" Choice

To Soeur Thérèse Showering Roses

"O GENTLE damozel, do thou give ear!
We'd have thee arbitress," the flowers cried.
"Scarce can our rival souls be satisfied
Till from thy sainted lips it shall appear
Which 'mong our sisters three who cluster here
May count herself The Little Flower's pride.
May't be the rose? or lily by her side?
Belike 'tis she, coy violet hiding near."

Full graciously the smiling maiden said:
"Thee, humble violet, chose I when on earth,
Whereby I came to prize the lily's worth."
The eager rose blushed here to deeper red.
"But thou, the type of Jesus' burning breast—
Thy bloom, sweet rose, put I above the rest."

Dream Travel

ADIEU, my wee traveler, close your eyes,
Dreamlets are sifting adown from the skies,
And we must be off, away and afar,
To see, to see where the wonder things are—
Over the tree crests and over the lea,
Singing heigh-ho right merrily,—
Rollicking, frolicking, laughing, singing
All of the long night through.

Rest, little curly head! Now the white sheep
Playfully tumble and playfully leap.
The slumber steeds are a-prancing, and soon
They shall be climbing the lanes of the moon;
Up where the fires of starland glow,
Elfland rivulets flash as they flow;
And aren't we the cunningest, stunningest folk
That ever the starland knew.

Lullaby, rockaby, next we shall go
Where the satiny dream tides silent flow.
A fig for the dolphins! Who cares for the whales,
As we speed it along with gossamer sails—
Down, down to the caverns of emerald green,
A-past the gay nymphs with their frolicsome queen;
And ever we lilt as we gracefully glide
Over the ocean blue.

And then with a whoop and a crack of the whip,
We'll sleigh it along on our northland trip.
  Jingle-bells, jingle-bells, swiftly we go
  Over the crinkling virgin snow,
Where crystalline turrets chum with the sky,
And the bear cubs jig to our lullaby;
    "But what be ye doing up here?" they shout:
    " 'Tis beware,—beware for you!"

To a Kindly Sympathizer

'TIS yet too soon, good sir, for thee to seek
By proffered sympathy ill-timed, to halt
This torrent of parental grief. These two
Leave thou with God—'twere best. Show but thy face;
Nor speak, save sparingly at best. Poor words,
So maladroit! Seem they not vulgar here
In awful presence of so vast a woe?
Leave them with God—'twere better so. Speak here
By kindly pressure of thy hand, or by
Thine eye's mute eloquence. When Heaven sends
An overplus of anguish like to this,
'Twill have its way. Wouldst vainly seek to stay
The surcharged udders of a brooding sky?
E'en nature's storms must spend themselves, ere calm
Resume its sunshine sway. Better the eye
Suffuse with tears, than that pale haggard grief,
Unblest by largess if relieving tear,
Unto the soul's grim fortalice retire
To bar the door, and sullen woo despair.

Come where she lies in snowy raiment garbed,
As when her first great sacramental joy
Made her glad fiancee of Christ the King.
Shrink not, tho' death be here; for death is kind

To innocence, and all but leaves intact
That tenement of clay where angel soul
Did once abide. How like to counterfeit
Of slumber this, her calm repose in death,
With faint suggestion of her wonted smile
On lips, here sealed in silence evermore!
Kneel, Breathe thou a prayer, and say farewell!

From "Idyls of the Hearth"

To the Bumblebee

O BUMBLEBEE,
How pompously
Thou fliest all fields over!
A bumblebee
Should humble be,
And not claim all the clover.

O, bumblebee,
How clumsily
Thou gatherest thy honey!
Not bumblebee,
But stumblebee
Would best suit one so funny.

O, bumblebee,
Thou grumblebee!
Leave off thy noise eternal!
I'm sick of thee,
Thou mumblebee,
With all thy fuss infernal.

O, bumblebee,
What driveth thee
In every known direction?
I'd nick-name thee
"Old Tumblebee"—
Thou tumblest to perfection.

O, bumblebee,
Molest not me;
Keep far away thy stinger;
Or I, may be,
Will crumble thee
If thou presume to linger.

O, bumblebee,
Then here's to thee—
Thou stumble-grumble-tumble-bee!
I wish thee glee,
Where'er thou flee,
Old tumble-grumble-stumble-bee!

To Little Dog Petey

(From a glance at his photo)

SO this is the dog you call Petey?
To be sure there's a dog in there,
If you'll search hard enough to find him
A-peekin' through all that hair.

But I can't help thinking that Petey
Was built in a bit of a dash—
Kind o' shoveled out of a snowdrift,
And plopped down here with a splash.

Or he's likely as not from the southlands
Snatched from a cotton bale;
And got o' the Lord two peepers,
With a bark just ahead of his tail.

Hark! Hark! How the rats are rejoicing
From Madison southward to Twelfth!
How their vivas are rending the night air,
Each a-drinkin' the other's health!

And the cats are a-havin' their troubles,
A-rushin' their jobs night and day,
Since you turned up your toes to the daisies,
And Charon bore you away.

Well, Petey, peace to your ashes!
  You were a dog, b'lieve me!
And the rats must have gotten the ague
  Wherever you happened to be.

And I 'spose you can preach us a lesson
  That'll go right straight to the mark;
For you seem to be sayin' in language
  That sounds like your old-time bark:

"If ye were all men as truly
  As I was a dog clean through,
Diogenes wouldn't keep lookin'
  So long for a man among you."

A Ballad to the Jingo

WHO are these vaunted patriots brave,
Who'd die our treasured land to save—
To plant their standards in the sky
To wave from freedom's mount on high!
They love their country every minute
For what there's in it.

Who are these staunch defenders, say,
Who'd point their swords and lead the fray!
Who'd shield from perils lurking near
Columbia's hallowed soil thrice dear!
They'd guard their country every minute
For what there's in it.

Who are these Tells beyond compare,
That yearn to breathe their native air—
Whose pulses thrill with quick'ning blood
Each moment for their country's good!
Oh, how their pulses beat each minute
For what there's in it!

Still waters ever deeply flow:
True worth courts never dazzling show.
Weep not, fair Liberty,—not dead
Thy soldier boys who fought and bled—
Who sought and seek not every minute
For what there's in it.

His Only Plea

"WOULDST enter here?" Saint Peter said
To the hurdy-gurdy man late dead.
"Art sure thy right of entrance here?
Canst justify thy smirched career?

"Thy doings past full many chide;
Complaint is heard both far and wide
How thou didst rack men's nerves all day
With jargon of thy ceaseless play.

" 'Tis said how many a tongue did swear;
How many a mortal tore his hair;
And with the hope of gentle pax,
Hath wished thee gone to Halifax.

"The shades of Mozart and Chopin,
With Liszt and others to a man,
Protest thou enter not in here
Within this hallowed atmosphere.

"Speak up, if thou hast aught to say,
Else turn thy steps another way;
No topsy-turvy babel strain
Perturbs the joys which here obtain."

Outspoke the hurdy-gurdy man,—
Within his brain had come a plan.
"Thy speech is just, 'tis even so,
Nor had I thought to work such woe.

"Yet many tongues malign my art,
Nor tell the pleasures I impart.
Where misery dwells and hearts are sad
Have I not made the children glad?

"They followed me in joyful bands;
They followed me and clapped their hands;
They trooped along to left and right;
Their souls grew merry with delight.

"The Savior did what I have done
To each and every little one.
Hear then my plea—my only plea—
The little ones they plead for me."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 015 898 067 8